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ABSTRACT

The school library exists to support the educational work of a school in three main ways: by providing the opportunity for children to be taught and learn for themselves research and independent learning skills; by exposing children to a broad range of literature in order to promote reading for pleasure and to produce children who want to read; and by encouraging the idea that libraries are positive, useful, and interesting places, thus developing a habit of using libraries that will remain into adulthood. The school library must be recognized as an essential part of the school and play a central role in the teaching program and daily life of the school. The importance placed on the school library will be reflected in the way that it is organized and maintained on a day to day basis. This guide helps school librarians to carry out the necessary tasks essential for maintaining an organized, and thus effective, library in the school. The guide is divided in three sections: (1) "Book Stock"--fiction, non-fiction, and stock selection; (2) "Management and Administration"--controlling borrowing, supervision of the library, delegating tasks, and routine jobs checklist; and (3) "Keeping up Appearances"--20 ideas for keeping the library working as effectively as possible and keeping it looking attractive, interesting, and exciting. (SWC)

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ED 416 861

Your School Library:

How it Works and How to keep it Working

Series of Caribbean Volunteer Publications

One of a series of publications produced by VSC volunteers in the Caribbean. Production funded by a grant from **British Development Division, Caribbean.**

#15

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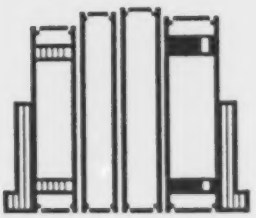
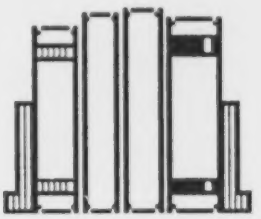
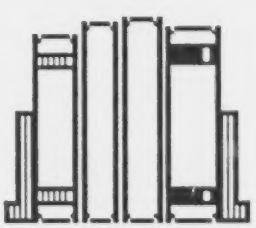
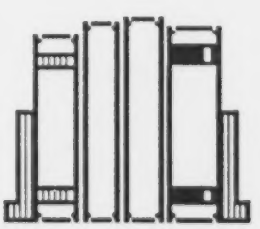



Your School Library

How it Works
and
How to Keep it Working

Your School Library

How it Works

and

How to Keep it Working.

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Dominica. Ministry of Education and Sports.
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Introduction

The school library exists to support the educational work of your school in three main ways:

i) by providing the opportunity for children to be taught and to learn for themselves the skills of research and independent learning.

ii) by exposing children to as broad a range of literature as possible in order to promote the idea of reading for pleasure and to produce children who not only can read but who want to read.

iii) by encouraging the idea that libraries are positive, useful, interesting places thus developing the habit of using libraries, a habit that will hopefully stay with a child into adulthood.

If the school library is to serve its purpose it must be recognised as an essential part of the school and play a central role in the teaching programme and daily life of the school.

The importance placed on the school library will be reflected in the way that it is organised and maintained on a day to day basis.

The following short guide will help you to carry out the necessary tasks essential for maintaining an organised and thus effective library in your school.

1 Book Stock

The books in your school library have been arranged into two main sections:-

Fiction i.e. story books

Non-Fiction i.e. information books

Each section is arranged differently with the aim of enabling children to find the material they need as easily as possible.

Fiction

Arrangement of Fiction.

To help children to select story books as closely suited to their particular reading ability or age as possible the fiction books have been put into three categories:-

i) *Beginning To Read* - books written using simple vocabulary dealing with simple concepts intended for children in the early stages of reading.

ii) *Stories For Younger Readers* - stories using more complex themes and vocabulary with an intended readership in the 7 - 9 age group approximately.

iii) *Stories For Older Readers* - stories dealing with more mature issues or themes using a wide vocabulary for more advanced readers of 10 and above.

So that the books can be kept in the category to which they have been assigned they have all been labelled with circles on their spines in one of three colours. Books with the same coloured circle on them belong to the same category. The three categories can thus be easily identified at a glance by children of any grade.

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Adding a new fiction book to your library

As new books arrive at your school they will need to be labelled so that they can be put on the library shelves in the most appropriate place to be of best use to the students. The label will make it easy for that book to be replaced on the correct shelf each time it is returned to the library.

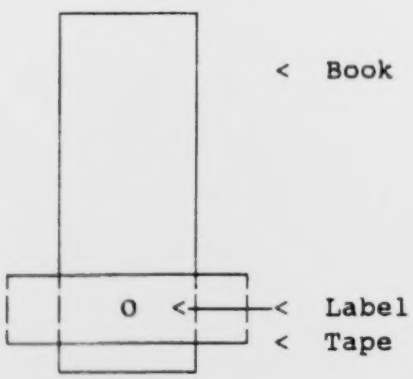
Step 1

Examine the book to decide which of the three categories it should go into.
[Refer to the books already in the library and compare them with the new one to make sure that the reading level in each category remains consistent]

It is worth remembering that although a book may appear at first glance to be written for a beginner reader in that it looks like a picture book (with a large proportion of illustration to text) its contents may be more suited to an older reader e.g. it may be dealing with concepts or issues which are too mature for a young child to understand. In such a case it would be more appropriate to place the book in one of the other categories.

Step 2.

Label the book with a circular label of the appropriate colour fixing the label approximately 2cm above the base of the spine. Cover the circle with a short length of clear tape (3 - 4 cm) to keep the label in place.



Step 3.
Add date label,bock card etc. as necessary (see chapter 2)

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Non-Fiction

Arrangement of Non-Fiction.

The non-fiction books have been arranged on the shelves according to their subject. All the books on the same topic should be together on the shelves so that the users of the library can find the subject they are interested in as quickly and easily as possible.

Labels have been fixed to the spines of the non-fiction books so that they can be kept in the category to which they were originally assigned and so that all of the library users can clearly see the subject of the book.

In most schools the non-fiction books have been given two labels, one showing a colour the other a number. In smaller schools books have a coloured label only.

The coloured, rectangular label shows to which broad subject area the book belongs e.g. science, religion, geography, social studies etc. All the books with the same coloured label will be on topics which come into the same broad subject area. e.g. a book on general science, one on geology, one on astronomy and another on physics will all have a label of the same colour because they all fall into the science category.

A colour code chart shows the different colours used and which subjects they represent (see overleaf)
The colours used vary slightly from school to school so if necessary you can stick labels of the colours being used in your library onto the chart on the next page.

A version of this chart should be on display in your library as near as possible to the information books.

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Colour Code Chart For Non-Fiction Books

Subject Area/ Colour Code/ Number	Subjects Included
General Knowledge **Beige** 000 - 199	Computers.Libraries.Journalism Supernatural.Psychology.
Religion **Dark Blue** 200 - 299	Religions.
Social Science **Pink** 300 - 399	Pollution.Transport.Customs. Money. Social Problems. Education. Commerce. Communication.
Language **Silver** 400 - 499	English Language. Other Languages.
Science **Red** 500 - 559	General Science. Maths.Astronomy. Physics.Chemistry.Geology.
Science **Green** 560 - 599	Nature. Animals. Plants.
Technology **Orange** 600 - 699	Inventions.Medicine. Engineering. Farming.Pets.Food.Home Economics. Industries.Woodwork.Metalwork. Business Studies. Building.
Arts **Light Blue** 700 - 799	Architecture. Painting. Drawing. Crafts.Hobbies.Music.Sports. Games.Films & T.V.
Literature **Gold** 800 - 899	Plays. Poetry. Literary Criticism.
People & Places **Yellow** 900 - 999	Geography. Famous People. History.

Classification Numbers

In schools with larger collections of books a more precise method of identifying the different subjects has been used in addition to the colour coded labels. In this system the different subjects are represented by numbers displayed on a label on the spine of each book (known as the **classification number** or **class number.**) By using numbers rather than colours it is possible for many more subjects to be individually identified.

Books on the same subject will have the same number as each other.
e.g.

Title	Subject	Class No.
Geology Around Us	Geology	551
Rocks and Gems	Geology	551
The Earth's Crust	Geology	551

Books on subjects related to each other but which are not absolutely identical will have numbers which are close numerically but are not exactly the same. e.g.

Title	Subject	Class No.
Looking at the stars	Astronomy	523
Physics Experiments	Physics	537
Rocks and Gems	Geology	551
Chemistry In Action	Chemistry	540

These are all science subjects and so all have classification numbers in the 500's

To find a book on a particular subject the library user has to look for that subject's number in the **subject index.** The subject index lists subjects in alphabetical order and gives the classification number for each one. Having found the appropriate number the library user looks at the books on the shelves for that number. Books bearing that number will be about that subject or very closely related to it.

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Giving a book a classification number

When a new non-fiction book arrives at your library it will need to be given a classification number so that it can be placed in the most appropriate place on the library shelves i.e. with other books on the same or a related subject.

Step 1

Examine the book carefully to determine its subject. Look at the title and the contents page and skim through the pages of the book itself. There may also be a short introduction which gives you a good idea of what the book is about. Start by being as specific as you can about the book's subject and refer to the subject index to see if the subject you have in mind is listed.

Step 2

If the word you are looking for in the index is not listed try looking for another word that means the same. If there is no synonym to search for then think of a broader term or subject to look for instead.
e.g.

Title: Growing Anthuriums.
Subject: Anthuriums

The index does not list anthuriums so you have to think of another term which is slightly more broad e.g. Flowers

Title: All about Pythons
Subject: Pythons

The index does not list pythons so a broader term needs to be looked for e.g. Snakes

Step 3

Having found the classification number for the subject you are dealing with make a note of it inside the book so that a spine label can be written later.

Adding a new non-fiction book to your library

Step 1

Examine the book to decide on its subject (see Classification section above)

Step 2

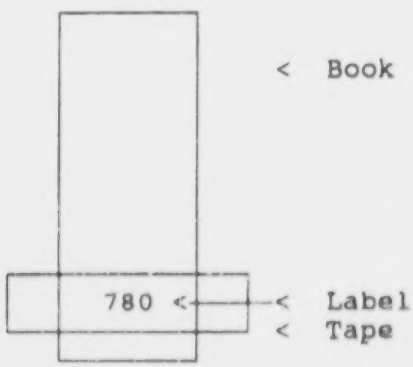
Look for that subject in the subject index
[if the first subject thought of isn't listed look for a synonym or a broader term - see Classification section above]

Step 3

Write the subject number found in step 2 inside the book at the top of the first page.

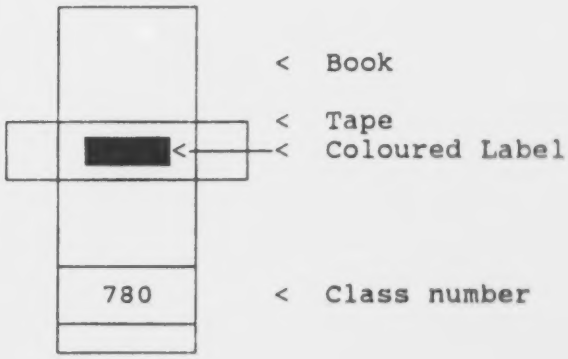
Step 4

Write the classification number on a spine label and fix it to the book about 2cm from the base of the spine. Cover the label with a short length of clear tape (3 - 4cm) to keep it in place.



Step 5

Using the colour code chart select the colour which represents that subject and fix a label of that colour onto the spine of the book approximately 10cm from the base of the spine. Cover the coloured label with a short length of clear tape (3 - 4cm) to keep it in place.



Step 6

Add book cards/date label etc. as necessary.
(See Chapter 2.)

Discarding books

To keep the library looking as attractive and useful as possible it is important that as much care and thought is put into removing books from the library as is put into adding new ones.

Books will need to be removed from the library for the following reasons:-

- They are old and so are giving out of date, incorrect or misleading information.
- They are damaged beyond practical repair.
- They are irrelevant to the needs of the students or staff and so are not being used.

Identifying books to be discarded is an ongoing process which will <u>always</u> be part of the library routine.

When books are returned to the library the librarian on duty can take the opportunity to put on one side any that are damaged. These can be examined more closely later and any that cannot be repaired must be discarded.

Every time the books on the shelves are examined to check that they are in order the librarian or library helper can be looking out for books that are in poor condition or which seem not to have been borrowed for some time. By looking at the date label for the number of times it has been stamped it is easy to identify which books are not being borrowed. If there are no dates on the date label then the book has not been borrowed

If the book is not being used by anyone, why keep it?

When a book is discarded from the library remember to: -

- remove the date label and other pieces of library stationery such as the book card pocket and book card from the book

- write in the book or, ideally, use a rubber stamp saying *'removed from school library'*

By doing these two things it will clear which books are still officially library books and which ones have been removed from stock. Once a book has been removed from the stock you don't want it to get put back in again by mistake.

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Quality not Quantity - The Library Stock

For your library to be of maximum use to its users it must be possible for them to find appropriate material as easily as possible. One serious barrier to achieving this goal is to have shelves full of material which is either too **advanced** for any of your library users, too **old** to be accurate or useful, or too **damaged** to be usable.

It is worth remembering that a book is a practical tool not a decoration. It is only worth having if it can provide useful information or can give pleasure. Keeping material just to fill the shelves is a waste of space and effort but worse still it creates disappointment and frustration in the users of the library who will begin to believe that libraries are places full of old, irrelevant books that are of no use to anyone. Any good books that you do have will be obscured by the useless ones and so will never be used to their full potential.

Keep the library looking useful and relevant by repairing books when they are damaged and **discarding** books that are not now, and never will be, used. [see overleaf]

B) Student Cards System

Another simple method is to make a loan card for each student

e.g.

Name	
Form	
Date	Book

Each time the student borrows a book the details are written on their personal card.

The cards can all be kept in the library in order of the students' names.

When the book is returned the details of the book are crossed out.

The loan card also serves as a useful record of that student's reading.

As with the previous system however the details of each book have to be repeatedly written down although of course the student's name need only be written once.

2 Management and Administration of the Library

Controlling Borrowing

To keep the library running smoothly a system of controlling the movement of books in and out of the library is needed.

You need to be able to tell who has what, when they took it out and when it should be returned.

According to the size of the school and the number of library users three basic methods of controlling borrowing can be used.

A) Log Book System

In small schools an easy way to check on who has borrowed a book is to keep a log book or ledger.
Every time a book is borrowed the name of the borrower, the date borrowed and the author and title of the book are written down in the ledger:

Name	Date	Author/Title
P.Charles	3.6.94	E.Blyton.Castle of Adventure

When the book is returned the entry in the ledger is crossed out.

Name	Date	Author/Title
~~P.Charles~~	~~3.6.94~~	~~E.Blyton.Castle of Adventure~~

The main disadvantage to this method is that it is time consuming since details about every book borrowed have to be written out each time the book is borrowed.

When a book is borrowed the **bookcard** is removed from the book and the borrowers name is written on it together with the date the book is due back.
The date due is also written in the book on the **date label.**

The bookcards of the books borrowed are kept in the library in order of the authors' surnames. They can also be kept in order of the date the books are due back and then in order of the authors' surnames within each date. By doing this it is very easy to identify which books are still outstanding on any particular day.

When a book is returned the bookcard can be found from the file by checking for the author's name and the title which will be shown on the **bookcard pocket.** Having found the bookcard in the file it is then replaced in the book.

Make doubly sure that the correct bookcard has been found by checking the students name against the one written on the bookcard.

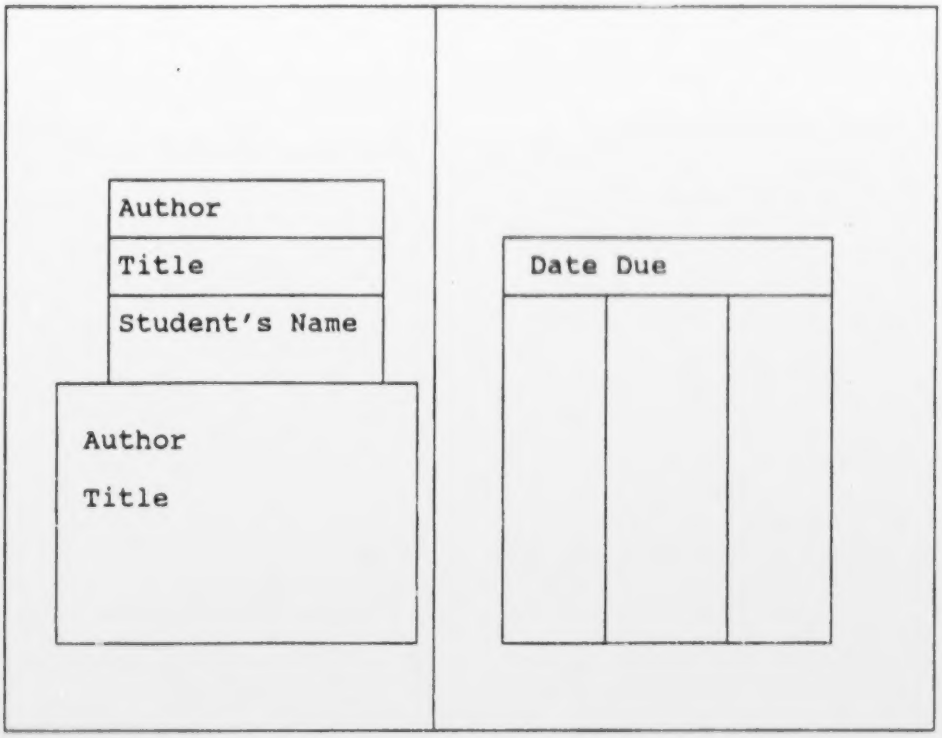
It is important that great care is taken in removing or replacing bookcards so that the book always has the correct bookcard in it.

When a book is returned always replace the bookcard in it immediately. Do not leave books lying around to be attended to later as this will inevitably lead to errors being made. Errors are time consuming to sort out and cause unnecessary upset when students are accused of not returning books when, in fact, they have.

C) Bookcard System

Where larger numbers of books and students are involved a lot of time can be saved by using a system where each book has its own card which shows the author, title and classification number or category. This card, called the **bookcard,** is placed in a specially designed holder or pocket, the **bookcard pocket,** which is glued inside the book's cover in such a position that it covers little or no text. The bookcard pocket shows the same information as the bookcard itself.

The book also has a **date label** glued into it usually on the opposite or the same page as the bookcard pocket. The date label is where the date for the book's return is written or preferably stamped, for the benefit of the borrower.



Routine Library Jobs - a checklist

The job of the librarian is a continual one involving a large number of routine tasks which need to be attended to regularly if the library is to remain organised and attractive to its users.

Here is a summary of the jobs that most school librarians will need to carry out regularly, either themselves or with the help of students, colleagues or parents.

- Tidy books on the shelves to maintain the correct order.
- Clean the library and its contents i.e.books and shelves
- Repair damaged books
- Remove old, unused books
- Remove out of date/torn/old posters and replace with new ones
- Check on students/staff members with overdue books
- Process new books to add to the library i.e. glue in date labels and bookcard pockets, write bookcards, assign classification numbers

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Supervision of the Library

It is important that use of the library is carefully supervised so that there is proper control over the borrowing of books. When the library is situated in its own room it should only be open when the librarian or someone trained by them in the operation of the library is present.

Any material taken from the library needs to be checked out in the proper manner whether borrowed by a student or a member of staff. By being careful about this you will prevent your library from being dismantled book by book as people take away items on permanent loan!

Do not underestimate peoples propensity for acquiring books to keep in their home, office or desk.

Delegating tasks

To help with routine duties and also to help students to feel involved in the operation of their library a library committee or group of library prefects could be formed from keen students and, perhaps, parents. The group could be trained in how to issue books, repairing books, tidying shelves etc. (see checklist of routine library jobs below) as well as organising library activities such as displays, competitions, storytelling and of course, fund raising

3 Keeping Up Appearances

It is a major part of the school librarian's job to ensure that the library looks attractive and welcoming at all times and is easy to use for both staff and students alike. It should always be easy to see where everything is with signs and notices displayed clearly. The room and the books in it must be kept clean and dry in order to maintain an attractive environment but also to help protect the books from damage caused by insects and damp.

The actual stock of books that you have will not change much from term to term so the children's interest in the library has to be maintained in other ways.

Overleaf are twenty ideas to help you to keep your library working as effectively as possible and to keep it looking attractive, interesting and exciting.

The ideas are not in order of importance. Any idea to improve the style and effectiveness of a library is important.

Twenty Ideas for a Better Library

1) - Keep the books in the correct order on the shelves so that they can be found easily.

2) - Make sure all the students are taught about how the library is organised and why.

3) - Make sure all the different sections of the library are clearly labelled so that everyone can find what they need.

4) - Stand some hardback books up on empty shelves with their front covers facing forwards to show off what are often attractive pictures on the jackets.

5) - Organise a poster designing competition to advertise the library.

6) - Remove all the books from the shelves every month or so to dust both the shelves and the books.

7) - Make sure the library is included on the school's cleaning rota.

8) - Encourage students to bring in posters or pictures they have drawn to put up in the library.

9) - Have a noticeboard for displaying interesting news items, details of school events, book reviews etc.

10) - Don't have books on shelves that are too high for people to reach.

11) - Make sure that all the children are taught about how to look after books properly.

12) - Remove old, out of date, badly damaged books from the library.

13) - Choose books on one broad topic to display alongside pictures and actual objects on the same subject e.g. a display about " *The Sea*" might include books on fish, pollution, ships, seashells plus *actual* seashells, driftwood, rocks etc all displayed on empty shelves or on a table.

14) - Encourage children to write reviews about books they have read and display them in the library.

15) - Put potted indoor plants in the library.

16) - Change the position of pictures and posters from time to time to 'fool' people into thinking that there is something new in the library.

17) - Have storytelling sessions in the library after school or during break times .

18) - Increase the range of information held in the library by cutting out useful articles from newspapers and magazines, pasting them onto sheets of paper and collecting them together in different subject folders with headings such as *health, banana industry, tourism, nutrition etc.*

19) - Try to provide newspapers and magazines in the library by asking for teachers or parents to donate them when they have finished with them.

20) - Make sure all the staff in the school are aware of what is in the library and how it is arranged so that they can encourage their student's to use it effectively.

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